

SUGAR SATO! and SONOKO KATO! beat the hell out of each other! MITSU HARU MATSUNAGA! freaks out in barbed wire! SHIMA NOBUNAGA! goes hogwild! CAROL MADORI! addles the Ripper. and other things.

ALOHA~!

WELCOME TO THE DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #86!

The Death Valley Playboys have been watching tapes like SUPERFREAKS to keep up with the swanky deluge of Grappling Awesomeness supplied by Bad-ass Billy, GLENN~! King Of Men~!, Tracy and Rob Vincent- Canadian Superstud. I AM DEAN! I AM FIRST! HERE I AM....

GAEA-G-PANIC #14- 11/30/98.

(byDEAN RASMUSSEN)

SUGAR Sato vs Sonoko Kato:

MAN! This was some BIG-TIME professional wrestling. Sugar and Sonoko have a very beautiful, simple match where they doggedly focus on three specific points of attack- Kato goes for chokes and sleepers, Sugar starts off going for the leg but settles for an extended foray into striking that gets downright WITHERING in its intensity. This was like an ARSION or BattlARTS match because I don't think they ran the ropes once. It was all in the middle of the ring and it was stiff as a mutha. Sonoko starts off by wrangling the alluring SUGAR into a Crippler Crossface (or Haji-Gataji-Kaji-Maji) and then settling into a Chigusa sleeper. Kato has become a total Chigusa Fangirl- forsaking all shootstyle to go all Roman and matty and stuff so here we begin the Ode to Chigusa. Sugar hits some Dragonscrews to set up her Figure Four that Sonoko finally gets out of after going about the Steamboat amount of time before reaching the ropes. After a couple of exchanges of Sleeper Attempts and Dragonscrews, SUGAR busts out her PHAT ASS Urican and Kato decides to match her Uricans with her big kicks. Sugar has been filling out as she is entering deeply into Womanhood, leaving the scrawniness of her girlish style far behind, becoming a more powerful wrestler and becoming a harbinger of a new age of SuperVixen- to replace the ULTIMATE Supervixen Mima Shimoda. Sugar might actually beat out Mima- just because Sugar has that supercool Innocence Lost look going which makes her ass-kicking tendencies seem that much more beautiful and multi-faceted . Plus, her Uricans now look meaner than Ozaki's just because Sugar is putting a lot more muscle behind them now that she is entering the full bloom of Womanliness. Sonoko Kato has also been entering the Kingdom of True Womanhood so she is Kato and Sugar basically spend the rest of the match bashing each other in the head, with Sugar hitting three of her swanky powerbombs. Finally it comes down to all to Sugar and Kato going toe to toe- Urican to Urican- with Sugar crushing Kato's head with three VERY LARGE shots to the head to kill the young Sonoko dead. Sugar is then not a very good winner by stomping the mortal remains of Miss Kato in a bout of minky RAGE! This was fun. This was cool. This was good.

Chikayo Nagashima vs Toshie Uematsu:

Nagashima is white hot as of late and Toshie Uematsu is on a big comeback so I was sufficiently stoked about this. I was a little disappointed the first time I watched this and I can't figure out why- because the second time I watched it, it was really good. They are a sloppy in a couple of spots but overall it's pretty sharp stuff- with it veering off into highflying tangents and neato suplexes. Toshie does some nice counters out of Nagashima's totally BOSS Fishermanbuster Suplex- including the stealable Double Knee Dropkick. Nagashima is such a cool little flyer and the fact that she's incorporated some top of the line suplexes puts her in a different realm of worker than the formative last two years. Toshie Uematsu refuses to fade into obscurity and she seals her own fate as a neato wrestler with the Kawada no-sell of the first Fishermanbuster so she can stumble into the second one as Nagashima mows her down. This one grows on you and I think I'm a watch it again.

KAORU/ Ishii vs Meiko Satomura/ Toshie Uematsu:

HEY! Riina Ishii gets some airtime! WOO-HOO! She's my darkhorse favorite of the youngsters in GAEA. Underutilized and possibly talented, she always showed the goods whenever she showed up in the random tag. She doesn't botch anything here and is all feisty- making with the headbutts and elbows. The big story is that KAORU thinks Satomura is a little spoiled prisspot and Meiko thinks KAORU is a dried up old hag. Each has gotten a a pin on the other with KAORU killing the motherFUDGE out of Satomura with a RUNNING Excalibur in a singles match recently and Meiko got the Straightjacket Death Valley Bomb on the divine KAORU in a tag match, so this is the next in the series of HATE! This was pretty cool- as Riina Ishii hits a FAT ASS Toprope Senton on Meiko to the glee of KAORU and they both spend a lot of time doing lots of toperope double stomps on the Future Of Professional Wrestling. They do this nifty section where it's Lucha-like in its complexity and sharp in its execution where it goes from a KAORU dropkick on Satomura into a triple roll-up section into German Suplex and ends up as Uematsu Powerbomb. Toshie Uematsu and KAORU start beating the crap out of each other and lil Ishii falls victim to Satomura's Death Valley Bomb and there you go. KAORU decides postmatch that she ACTUALLY hates UEMATSU's guts and goes after her. The ever-funtabulous GAEA pull-apart ensues.

ToshiyoYamada vs Mayumi Ozaki:

This limps in and nevers gets up to speed. They actually do a crappy version of the Kato vs SUGAR match from earlier in the show but Sugar didn't kick out three Dangerous Backdrops, no-sell a toprope spin kick and hit the lamest Uricans in her career. Yamada sleep walked through this and hit some the cruddiest Reverse Gory Drivers I've ever seen her hit. Someone was hurt and I think they went ahead with the match anyway. Whatever the excuse, there's no excuse for this making it onto TV.

Toshiyo Yamada vs Aja Kong:

It's still not clear if Yamada's busted up body is finally catching up with her because Aja is Aja- so this is gonna be great regardless of what condition her opponent is in. Whereas it looked like Oz was easing up on Toshiyo, Aja knows what it takes to be the Woman so she has a big flashback to the Hotta vs Yamada matches and remembered that Yamada is capable of taking a large beatdown. One reason that this match works is that Aja channels this and proceeds to lay

down the headbustin'. The other reason that this match does nothing but work is because one of the reasons Aja is one of the all-time greats is because she fearlessly sells like a wrestler half her size- which makes her opponent always look good and makes Aja look good in the annals of Professional Wrestling- because she will be remembered as a great, giving wrestler as opposed to a monster heel- which is what she could have settled for. Aja takes control early, beating Yamada to death with tres stiff chairshots as Aja kicks Yamada's ass from one end of Kouraken to the other. They do this spot where Aja throws her off this ramp while Aja has her draped in a section of the guardrail. After Yamada gets in some kicks and Aja gets in some mauling, Yamada gets knocked to the floor and Aja- being Aja- whips out The World's Phattest Ass Tope and takes out Yamada and the whole 1998 GAEA Freshman class. That HAD to suck! From there, it's a race to finisher as Yamada gets in a batch of her jumping spin kicks that Aja takes like a QUEEN. Yamada fearlessly stands there and takes a Building Demolisher of a Urican on the toprope as Aja proceeds to do the Backwards Powerslam off the top. Yamada gets in some desperation big kicks to the face but the gloves are off and the Big Urican Of Face-Caving Proportions is a-coming and it's all over. I love Aja Kong. I loved this match. You, gentle reader, should get all of this.

@#@@#@#@#@ MICHINOKU PRO TV Special - 1998 TAG LEAGUE SPECIAL 10/98.
(byREVEREND RAY!)

Last time on as the MPro turns...

Hoshikawa gets his first big win over the Great Sasuke. Tiger Mask IV and the Great Sasuke defeat Masked Tiger and Sasuke the Great in a tag match and taking Tiger's hood revealing him to be Takashi Ono. During this, there is a fall out between Sasuke and the Mpro men, resulting in a pull apart between Delfin and Sasuke. Sasuke says "Hey, I really miss the days of Kaientai DX kicking your asses all the time". So, armed with boxes of Trojans, a case a Schlitz, a carton of Kools, and subscriptions to Club Magazine, Cherri and Hustler, The Great Sasuke convinces the new surley punks of wrestling, CRAZY MAX, that he's scum just like them and they should whip ass on those puss boys in MPro. So, the Great Sasuke becomes SASUKE, hooks up with CRAZY MAX and Bad Hair Day (Ono, Orihara) and gets a great new evil mask to become the new rudo of Michinoku Pro.

Teams for the tournament : Yone Genjin/The Convict, Hoshikawa/Yakushiji, Hamada/Tiger Mask IV, Delfin/Naniwa, Nobunaga/Sumo Fuji, SASUKE/Sasuke the Great.

SASAUKE/Sasuke the Great vs. Super Delfin/Gran Naniwa:

The Sasuke's attack at the bell because Delfin and Naniwa have the UGLIEST color scheme this side of Tomoko Watanabe's outfits from that AJW show from 1993 I reviewed about 5 or 6 reports back. Los Sasuke's come up with new and dickish ways to UN FOUL! Crab-boy, including a top rope knee drop by SASUKE to Naniwa's gnads as the Great holds his legs open. Naniwa goes Doctor Bomb crazy, but they can't get the pin. Delfin proves that Lyger is the true master of the shotay. The Sasukes do stereo quebradas onto the Fashion Emergencies. They superplex Naniwa for a 2 before Delfin saves, so they superbomb him. The Great moonsaults both guys, then SASUKE somersault sentons them both and Ted Tanabe DQs them

for some unknown reason. Post match, SASUKE and Nobunaga cut a promo. Shima threatens the JYB boys (what's that stand for anyone? Jive Young Brothers?) Yakushiji and Hoshikawa with handcuffs. SASUKE quotes Michael Jackson by saying "Bad! Bad! Bad! Who's Bad!" I'm not making that up either.

Shima Nobunaga/ SumoFuji vs Hoshikawa/Yakushiji:

Hoshikawa takes it to the mat early with Sumo and has the advantage. Yakushiji and Shim are pretty evenly matched up until CRAZY MAX decide to get all rudo on them, including some floor brawling with Nobunaga using people's shoes which are lying on the outside of floor mats. Sumo Fuji proves that he seems to have studied the tapes of the Giant and not Canyon like the rest of his surley band of dicks as his offense just ain't as cutting edge. Hoshikawa beats on him a bit, including a cool drop kick to the face until Fuji UN FOUL!s him. Shima and Masato get all lucha on each other, culminating in Peter Pan's baseball slide into a head scissors on the floor. JYB boys take it into the crowd, including Yakushiji knocking one of the garage doors in the fine warehouse they wrestle in with Shima's body. They tie up Shima in the ropes and Hoshikawa kicks him in the chest a few times, then kills him with a lariat in ring. They bust out a weird move where Hoshikawa holds Shima up for for a suplex, Masato drop kicks him in the face and then Hoshikawa drops him into a gordbuster. CRAZY MAX start busting out their cool double teams on Yakushiji which ends with them going for their KDX surfer boy deal which Hoshikawa breaks up by drop kicking Nobunaga off the pile's back. CRAZY MAX then beat on Hoshikawa with even more tripped out double teams. It's like they started watching old Midnight Express matches while tripping on acid. The future of double team moves are here and they're used by CRAZY MAX! Learn to love it. Hoshikawa shows that for a shooter boy, he can throw a swank tope. Yakushiji beats on Sumo until Fuji hits a chokeslam for a two, then a powerslam for another two. He goes for another chokeslam, but Masato frankenranas out of it. JYB boys hit their Northern Lights Suplex/ moonsault and top rope drop kick into a German for two. Nobunaga tries to kill himself with a corkscrew plancha. Hoshikawa beats on Sumo until Judo low blows him. Nobunaga hits his reverse crucifix slam thingy that he stole from Mike Quackenbush and sets up for the best damn frog splash this side of Love Machine or Reckless Youth, but Yakushiji causes him to crotch himself on the top rope as the time limit expires. Both sides work the mic and I find it a million times more entertaining the Scott "The Foutain of Juice" Steiner on THE STICK and I don't even speak Japanese.

Shima Nobunaga/Sumo Fuji vs The Convict/Yone Genjin: This is clips. CRAZY MAX beats on both guys a bit and ends up getting a win via countout.

Yakushiji/Hoshikawa vs Delfin/Naniwa: This is also clips. A lot of guys hitting their finisher spots with their partners making the save. This one is real screwed up as it seems the bell rings to signal the finish before they get to the finish, which leads to things stopping and then taking it home quick with Naniwa pinning Hoshikawa with a forward roll up after ducking the Top Rope Drop Kick/German suplex finisher.

Yakushiji/Hoshikawa vs Tiger Mask IV/Gran Hamada:[clips] Tiger seems to get the youngsters in trouble a whole lot, but their partner makes the save. This ends as a draw as they slap cross arm breakers on each other.

Los SASUKEs vs The Convict/Yone Genjin:

This ends up outside the building as SASUKE throws Yone into a fountain outside the building and then tries to give him cramps by stealing food from people outside and jamming it into Yone's mouth. SASUKE busts out a fencing sword and uses it on the Convict. Los SASUKE's get DQed after 17 minutes when SASUKE holds open Yone's legs and The Great gives a diving headbutt to his area. That's right, they got DQed against a team with Yone Genjin on it. They beat up Ted Tanabe afterwards. SASUKE does his new bit where he sits in the ring with a mini table with a beer and food on it. He stands up and flips the table over. He's now a weird mix of the Sandman and Tiger Jeet Singh with work rate.

Hey, they're selling the Secrets of Magic Revealed on video in Japan. And we got it free in the States. USA! USA! USA! We go on location and guitar boy from the usual MPro show sings a song outdoors.

Battle Royal : This is one of the royal rumble style battle royals where all of the Michinoku Pro experimental gimmicks are used. It starts off with the Leather Boy gimmick and one of the Masked Man GKs, followed by another GK and they eliminate the Leather Boy. Shiryu II comes in and one of the GK's eliminates the other. Enter the Convict and GEKKO and two gimmicks I can't figure out and one guy who I'm pretty sure is Ikeda in a the old Sasuke outfit. Enter Giant Zebra who was with the company a while back. Enter the Geisha Girl gimmick. Enter two guys doing the relay racer gimmick. They both do the schtick but never make it to the ring because when they make it to ringside, they start doing stretching exercises and they get jumped by a few people. The match ends up coming down to Shiryu II and the Geisha Girl which Shiryu II wins with the camel clutch. It's weird and it's the gimmicks, but it has it's moments.

Yone Genjin vs. Tiger Mask I:

The dream shoot match of all time as Cave Man Boy takes on one of the founders of the original UWF. Yone's sporting some heavy shoulder braces. This is a whole lot of "Tiger kicks and stretches the crap out of Yone and there's not a whole lot he can do about it". Tiger wins with his twisting toe hold into a knee bar for the win. Post match, Yone tells reporters, in Spanish mind you, that he's retiring in January.

Guitar Boy tries to bribe his way into getting an interview with SASUKE and his band of rudos with something in a bag. I'm assuming it's one of those naked woman cakes certain bakeries will make. Have I mentioned SASUKE's new mask rules? It seems like SASUKE is really into CRAZY MAX and Nobunaga seems to get a lot of mic time, which means that they're probably building Shima as their number 2 heat magnet.

10 Man Tag : Los SASUKE's & the entire CRAZY MAX vs Delfin, Naniwa, Yakushiji, Hamada, Tiger IV:

This breaks down right at the bell. They go around the building, SASUKE piledrivers Delfin on his little table. Judo Suwa sports a shirt with the "MPro Busters" logo on it. Yakushiji and Nobunaga hook it up again in a nice little segment where Yakushiji gets to whip out a bunch of his lucha stuff on a guy about as scrawny as he is. Naniwa doesn't wear his totally hideous outfit for the match, even though Delfin decides to. SASUKE UN FOULS! Naniwa as he attempts a leap frog. Naniwa hits his rope walk elbow because he's a tecnico now. Crazy Max bust out their triple teams on perennial whipping boy Yakushiji- including doing their version of the Surfer Boy pose where Nobunaga does his "My pole is this big and all you ladies are welcome to slide down it" dance while on top. CRAZY MAX tries for one triple team which Yakushiji escapes but the whole thing looks totally blown. Judo shows he hearts Kaynon. Naniwa shows he watches ECW because he steals Spike Dudley's Tornado stone cold ace crushin' chart bustin' diamond cuttin' acid drop. Judo Suwa decides to totally KILL himself by doing a tope where he lands mostly on his head and neck on the floor. SASUKE hits a Michinoku Driver II on Delfin but misses his moonsault senton. Delfin hits a bunch of 1/20th as good as Lyger's shotays. The Techincos hit 4 dives to the floor as Tiger puts away Sasuke the Great with a Tiger Suplex. It wasn't bad, but it could have been better. It was rough in spots. But given the fact SASUKE's teaming with 3 guys who have been wrestling all of 2 years and one guy who has a spotty reputation as a worker (who also apparently gave hair advice to Nobunaga who's now sporting the white spots in his hair. The Koji Kitao look is not in this season.) But, Suwa did die for your sins....

SASUKE/ Sasuke the Great vs Shima Nobunaga/ Sumo Fuji:

Well, the rudos decide to get all Smokey Mountain on us as they do a re-enactment of the Candido/Dark Secret match where Candio finally wins so he doesn't have to wear a baby bonnet. Eventually Los SASUKES take a count out loss so their buddies get an easy win. Delfin and company come out for a match but the Rudos come out and jump everyone. While SASUKE works the mic in the ring, Nobunaga takes a bottle right to the head from someone in the crowd. SASUKE brings out the Japanese Indies best kept secret, Massaki Mochizuki leading to a 12 man match....

SASUKE/ Nobunaga/ Fuji/ Suwa/ Sasuke the Great/ Mochizuki vs Delfin/ Tiger Mask IV/ Hamada/ Yakushiji/ Yone Genjin/ Hoshikawa:

This is clipped up a bunch. We get a lot of the standard spots we've been seeing through out the tournament (the SASUKE's top rope knee drop UN FOUL which looked like it didn't even come close to hitting). Mochizuki and Hoashikawa do a quick little segment where they kick each other real hard. There's a lot of things breakin' down in Hokkiado. Lot of near falls where someone runs in from a million miles away to break up the pin fall. The end comes when Genjin runs into a Mochizuki ax kick, eats a few palm stikes, a back kick and Mochizuki's triangle medula kick for the win. Have I mentioned SASUKE's new mask rules lately? Nobunaga gets points for competing after getting nailed in the head with a bottle. Welcome to the world of being a super hated rudo, my young friend.

Clips of Hamada/Tiger IV vs Nobunaga/Fuji: SASUKE and company are there to lend immoral support to their friends. The youngsters try to win, but Nobunaga's CRAZY Splash finds nothing

but knees. Fuji works over Hamada with a chokeslam, but he dives into a wakigatame and that's all she wrote.

Clips of Hamada/Tiger IV vs SASUKE/Tiger IV: Well, Grandpa didn't get his medication and he's all pissed off! This ain't pretty as it's a lot of brawling in what they showed, finally Hamada flips and rips off SASUKE's mask, getting DQed.

Clips of Hoshikawa/Yakushiji vs Yone/Convict : Convict hits a bunch of fat ass flying. Hoshikawa's shoulders are all taped up. Yakushiji puts away Yone with a diving rana for the pin.

Clips of Delfin/Naniwa vs Tiger IV/Hamada: They show everyone's stuff going back and forth. It comes down to Delfin giving IV the swinging DDT into the Delfin clutch when SASUKE runs in and the rudos beat the crap out of everyone, including Naniwa doing a stretcher job after a spiked piledriver on the floor. I dunno what the end result is.

Clips of Delfin/Naniwa vs Nobunaga/Fuji: Perhaps this was the purpose of the attack? Well, it doesn't help them much. Eventhough Crazy Max gets the Pole Slider Pose in, Delfin arm drags out of the Nodowa setting up the shotay for the pin.

Clips of Los SASUKEs vs Hoshikawa/Yakushiji : Lots of back and forth stuff. SASUKE gets a smoke in in the middle of the match and does a praying 4 sides of the ring piledriver. Yakushiji pulls a rana to save himself from getting superbombed. The end comes when SASUKE accidentally hits Sasuke the Great with his fencing sword and Hoshikawa Germans him for the pin and thus earn a spot in the finals against Delfin and Naniwa.

Tournament Final: Super Delfin/ Gran Naniwa vs Masato Yakushiji/ Naohiro Hoshikawa: It starts out with Naniwa and Hoshikawa taking it to the mat with Naniwa controlling. Delfin and Yakushiji face off, so CRAZY MAX and Los SASUKE's decide it's a good time to come out to the warehouse and set up camp. Delfin controls Yakushiji early until Masato hits a Sattelite Headscissors and his baseball slide into the same on the floor. Naniwa hooks up with Hoshikawa and shows what those dicks over in New Japan taught him as he give Naohiro the Ohtani boot scrapes. Delfin comes in and works on Hoshikawa's bad shoulder as Sasuke enjoys a brew and a cigar while hanging in his Ribera jacket. Yakushiji regains control for his team. The JYB's do a drop kick into a surfboard type move on Naniwa. Naniwa pulls out the move he used to win their first match in the tournament, but Yakushiji makes the save. Delfin with the half hour brainbuster and Macho Man Elbow for two counts. Delfin hits a plancha to Hoshikawa on the floor while Naniwa takes a page from Jericho by turning a Yakushiji rana into a half crab and then into an STF. Hoshikawa saves Yakushiji from the crab boy's Doctor Bomb, but comes up a little short with his tope. Delfin and Yak mix it up with Peter Pan send him out and getting in a tope as well. Hoshikawa gets twos with some suplexes. The JYB's get in their corner charges into the Northern Lights Suplex into the moonsault for two. They hit their top rope drop kick/German, Delfin makes the save. Hoshikawa hits Naniwa with the top rope roundhouse kick for two. Delfin gets double teamed, but ends up having Yak drop kick his own partner into a German for two. Yakushiji nearly gets the win with a flying rana. He scores a two

with a moonsault when Naniwa saves. They tried to set up the spot where Delfin shotays Yakushiji when he misses a drop kick but it doesn't seem to come off so well. Delfin with the swinging DDT/Delfin clutch, but Hoshikawa saves his partner's bacon. Masato ducks a corner shotay into a cradle for two, but runs into another shotay for an almost 3. Delfin DDT for 2. Delfin pulls out the brainbuster DDT that's the rage these days for two as Naniwa and Hoshikawa take turns killing each other on the floor. Delfin works over Yakushiji with back drop suplexes but can't get the 3. He goes to the shotay one too many times as Yakushiji catches him in another inside cradle to get the big upset win. Pretty good but it didn't seem like there was all that much heat for the match. I think the tournament did a good job in getting Yakushiji over a bit more, much like they've been building up Hoshikawa over the summer. Post match, Kaientai DX Dos Mil show up and cut a promo. Bascially SASUKE tells Delfin and Naniwa that not only do they dress funny, but they lost to a guy who dresses like Mr. B Natural. SASUKE further insults Delfin by doing his mock of the crawl of shame. And that is all the people need to know.....

BATTLARTS ON SAMURAI TV - 5/26/97
(byDEAN RASMUSSEN)

This was last year's model when BattlARTS was really starting to come into his own and before they got all high-concept with the Ishikawa childhood dreamcards, Otsuka the Actual Shooter and other twists that have filled the cofers these days. Guys kick other guys in the face really hard, and that's why we stalk the elusive BattlARTS, Little Jakey.

Minoru Tanaka vs. Daisuke Ikeda::

This was REALLY fucking beautiful. Ikeda and super up-and-coming hotshot Tanaka decide to beat the living POO out of each other. Tanaka does the greatest combination in the history of stiff Pro-Style wrestling with the spinning kick to the head which he follows up with a corner Dropkick of Facial-Bone Destroying proportions which Ikeda takes like a KING. Tanaka is On It here because he eschews the high-flying tendencies that he has developed and whipped out at length in the last couple of months, as he tries to extend his reach farther than the ten other guys in BattlARTS and looks to be shooting for New Japan spot down the line. (John D Williams, condescending bastard and absolutely coolest muthaFQer on the internet, says that NJ probably wanted Tajiri for the Kendo Ka Shin gimmick, but I would say that they should have grabbed Tanaka. He's a far more complete pro wrestler than Ishizawa OR Tajiri will ever be. And I really think Tajiri rules.) This match is more like what drew one to Minoru Tanaka to begin with- the same thing that makes Takeshi Ono so cool- the spectre of a little guy in pro wrestling who isn't a highflyer but who is more like those wiry redneck bastards in your homeroom that you hung out with- the one's who could beat the shit out of ANYONE because they were scrawny little redneck bastards. I could never explain it. It's the same concept. Ikeda is the Super Mauler Who Wrestles Like Johnny Saint When He Wants To and he and Tanaka start deep on the mat as they ride each other trying to position themselves into a submission. After trading submissions they go into a Striking and Suplexing the Living Crap out of each other. The suplexes aren't All Japan dangerous but the faster, more UWFi low impact and thus more shoot-looking. Tanaka hits the combo of TRUE hurtiness and Ikeda takes the eight count, takes

a Released German, escapes an ankle lock, takes some shots to the head and latches on a Kneebar and we have the pseudoshoot ending! WOO-HOO! One of the cooler seven minute matches I've seen.

Shoichi Funaki vs Alexander Otsuka:

In case you've forgotten, Shoichi Funaki used to be in Japan where he would wrestle like a WILDMAN and win a match and it would be long and competitive and cool and good and not retarded and would be pro wrestling and not sports entertainment. Here he's in with the bizarre shootboy Otsuka- who I always had pegged as a guy pretending to be a shooter but was neat in the Pro Style applications of a lot of shootstyle moves. And then he beats the shit out of Marco Ruas just to make me look like even more of an idiot. This is pretty classically WEIRD BattlARTS- The ending is: Otsuka with a Judo throw into a CrossArmbreaker; ropebreak; Funaki with TOTALLY Spine-fusing Released German Suplex; Otsuka with a lowgrade German Suplex; Single leg Takedown into Giant Swing; Funaki with a lucha roll-up countering out of an Otsuka German attempt into an ankle lock for the submission. FREAK OUT!!!

Katsumi Usuda vs. Takeshi Ono:

Katsumi is NOW one of my faves in BattlARTS. He kicks REALLY hard. REAL hard. I REALLY wanna see his match against Ikeda on the Ishikawa Childhood Dreamcard. Here he takes it to the mat with Takeshi Ono, who has supplied some of the coolest ass-kickings in the recent years. The cool thing about this is that I saw this shoot interview with Steven Regal from 1994 and a ECW-addled guy was saying that armbars are boring compared to moonsaults and going through tables (which it is, if you've ever seen Davey Boy Smith do an armbar). Regal said, "Well, it's all in how you do the armbar." This kind of match is what he was talking about. These two take it to the mat and the workrate is as frenetic as the most caffeine-soaked AAA youngster spotfest you'll ever see- the difference is that they punch the fudge out of each other NONSTOP the whole time. The fact that you can't take your eyes off the prickishness is the difference between this and your basic Great Muta head scissors. They go into an extended ankle-crimping sequence which they BREAK IT DOWN to a bunch of kicks to the head and thigh to set up another round of submissions with Usuda finally taking Ono's leg out to the point that he's ripe for the chokeout. Usuda was still formative here but Ono is ever the entertaining little shoot guy.

Yuki Ishikawa/ Naohiro Hoshikawa vs Victor Krueger/ Rambo:

If I want to watch a couple of roided out American bozos no-sell to a couple of Japanese Juniors, I'll watch Nitro or New Japan. Hoshikawa does kick Krueger right in the head a whole lot and that makes up for excesses that Krueger and Rambo go to achieve their half-assed monster gimmick. Not as horrible as it could have been, but I didn't pay to see this crap.

Takeshi Ono vs. Hidaka:

Hidaka is quite the new breed of BattlARTS guy (along with little flying shootstyle compatriots Fujita, Honma, and the ever-cultish Mach Junji)- what with his high-flying and lucha based stuff that only hints at the shootstyle base that BattlARTS draws from. With the number three guy in the promotion, Minoru Tanaka, going into big forays of high-flying in his matches these days,

Hidaka seems to have jumped on a new wave for the promotion that's rolling into the shore. This is last year though and Takeshi Ono beats the living hell out of him here. Hidaka hints at the lengthy exercises in the Shootstyle/flying Combo Style to come by whipping out the super cool Hurricanrana-Into-A-Kneebar. WHIP ASS! Ono kicks the hell out of the little guy and strangles him to death in an Octopus Hold.

Katsumi Usuda/ Alexander Otsuka vs. Victor Krueger/ Rambo:

Krueger is credible on the mat. He's actually like a talented version of Bryan Adams. The story of the match was that Kreuger and Rambo were really really big and strong. If I wanted to see that then I would have watched reruns of Bill Kazmier on ESPN2. Not stomach-churning but not worth watching at normal speed.

Shoichi Funaki vs. Minoru Tanaka

Shoichi Funaki's eternal problem when he was in BattlARTS and I think the main reason he was so much more at home in Michinoku Pro was the fact that he can't strike for beans and when in with the Gargantuan Ass-stomper that Tanaka can transform himself into, Funaki holds back the match because they can't have big sequences of these two beating the hell out of each other- so a dimension is missing. This all builds from the mat at first and never gets to build out of take-downs during the striking section because HEY! there isn't one. Funaki sticks a lot of pro-style stuff to compensate so the problem is that BattlARTS only works when the pro-style sections are luxuries that the BattlARTS contestants throw into the match to enrich the wrestling tapestry they are weaving. You can smell the desperation as Funaki can't match the call to arms as Tanaka starts suplexing the hell out of him and thus Funaki goes for a myriad of Dragonscrews to set up the finish of the best young shootstyle guy in the promotion submitting to Funaki's Figure Four. There you have it. From a style-blind perspective this was perfectly fine pro wrestling. From a BattlARTS freak perspective, this was a lot less than it should have been.

Yuki Ishikawa vs. Daisuke Ikeda

This is really beautiful psychology. The match starts with Ikeda showing that he is totally outmatched on the mat as Ishikawa works on his knee with a wad of leg submissions to keep Ikeda from his deadly striking and diminish his striking when he does finally get to his feet. Ikeda slowly kicks his way off the mat and gains the advantage as he gets his strikes in on Yuki, his Superior On The Mat. There are a lot of subtly GREAT things in this. The broad picture is that Ishikawa is outclassed on the mat but has enough mat moxy to take advantage of getting Ishikawa on the mat when possible after striking sets it up. Ishikawa is effective at striking when he has to use it to set up getting Ikeda back on the mat- so there is dissonance in their styles, but the overlap is also great. The little things are like when Ishikawa gets on the mat and starts striking with the SWANK slug to the face while applying the kneebar. As soon as Ishikawa has to break a submission, Ikeda begins kicking his ass all over the ring until the eight count and then Ishikawa will hit a fat ass suplex or takedown to get him back down. The striking sections are just fucking PRIMITIVE as they just punch each other right in the face to set up assorted takedowns and what have you. Something gets weird 2/3rds of the way through- Ikeda hits a big spin kick to the head and hits a Urange and is about to polish off Ishikawa and Ishikawa gets in

a last-gasp desperation knee-bar and I'm figuring Ikeda is gonna hit the ropes and go ahead and finish this baby, but then I have...ONE... singular sensation as Ishikawa goes for the Figure Four and Ikeda sells it for a LONG time before getting the ropes. They basically start all over again with Ikeda beating Ishikawa's head in from the mount position as Ishikawa is on his back. Sue me. Sue me. Shoot arrows through me, I have a feeling that something is veering off course as they continue to exchange lengthy submissions and are too tired to strike effectively for awhile. Ikeda has a late rally and really starts kicking Ishikawa in the face and gets in a Released Dragon Suplex and goes to finish him off with a Ray Guy-esque punt to the noggin when Ishikawa Dragonscrews him into a Kneebar and words echo through my head, N_Try to remember the kind of September when....Ó* but Ikeda gets to the ropes and gets a takedown. He gets on a clean Key Lock and Ishikawa LOCKS his hand to block! The bell rings! OKLAHOMA! WHERE THE WIND GOES RUSHING DOWN THE PLAINS! GET ALOT OF THIS! Lean on the fast forward for a lot of the non-great parts of the Main Event. The cool stuff will pop out at you, trust me.

@#@#@#@#@# LLPW LIVE BATTLE '97 (2/11/97)

(byPHIL RIPPA)

Come straight at you from Korakuen Hall it is the Lovely Ladies of Professional Wrestling. Woo-Hoo!!!

Mizuki Endo vs. Miho Watabe

Aahh, dear sweet small Miho Watabe. I have pants that are bigger than her. Still she is out there trying to rock like a hurricane. I guess it is the whole N_she tries hardÓ theory. Meanwhile, you have to respect someone like Endo who is willing to go out in public with a haircut that bad. Go figure. The match is basically what it should be. That would be Watabe being punted around the ring, with very little offense to speak of and the offense that she mustered isn't really damaging. But consider the size difference between these two, it is the right thing to do. The thing that you definitely want to watch is the great camera work as Endo does the foot scrap. The camera gets to within about 4 millimeters of Watabe's face. Cool. Watabe gets a wave of hit-and-run offense near the end to just let her save some face but eventually Endo drops her on her head with the Backdrop Driver and that is all she wrote.

Michiko Omukai vs Keiko Aono:

I still chuckle to myself about Aono. Dean, when giving me a quick rundown of who everyone was, said that Aono wore a whole lotta Paisley. He wasn't lying. Right there on your television screen. Nothing but green Paisley. Meanwhile, Omukai is another reason why my girlfriend is going to prevent me from watching wrestling as I sit drooling at the simple exquisite Michiko Omukai. Being completely distracted, I fail to note anything of worth in the match expect Omukai pinning Aono in such a way that I need a little quiet time.

Yasha Kurenai vs. Carol Midori vs. Mikiko Futagami

The sometime tag partners collide in a triangle match with rules that I still am trying to figure out. Basically, it wasn't single elimination and there were only two wrestlers in the ring at any one

time. The third would wait outside for the end of the fall. It was almost like a round robin type system but they didn't carry it all the way through. Oh well. Kurenai wins the raffle and starts the match on the outside but she gets involved quickly as Midori rolls up Futagami in 30 seconds. Midori, being the best wrestler of the bunch, whips out all sorts of neat stuff against Kurenai. First would be the splash off the top rope to the floor. Then there was the top rope hurricanrana. She finishes it all off with a missile dropkick. What does she get for her display? Well, she misses a splash and Kurenai rolls her up to hand her a loss. Kurenai and Futagami are next on the agenda and the wrestling is quickly forgotten, which is not surprising considering Futagami really doesn't do much of it but since she is easy on the eyes, I am not going to complain. The two do their homage to New Japan Heavyweights as they trade running into each other for no real reason. They then wander around a little bit and my eyes start to glaze over when what should happen but Kurenai gets absolutely DESTROYED as she takes a hot shot into an exposed turnbuckle. From here on out, it is nothing but brawling. Chairs, chairs and more chairs. Oh there was the part where Futagami introduces Kurenai into a sign somewhere out in the crowd. Then she snatches up her ever present stick and goes to work. So the rest of the time, they trade stick shots. Weak ones at that. Can't have everything can you? Futagami breaks off a backdrop driver and then nails a guillotine leg drop to eliminate Kurenai. Midori races in to take on Futagami again and it is back to the brawling. Eventually, Midori whips Futagami into about seven rows of chairs. This is when Futagami either does an amazing job of selling or really fucks up her back because she, and I am not kidding you when I tell you this, starts crying. Right there on the floor. Just like our pal Ice Train. Midori seems to ease up on her slightly but a couple of jumps on the back has me thinking otherwise. The finishing sequence starts as Futagami misses a leg drop and gets hit with a Back Suplex. Midori rolls her up but Futagami keeps her momentum going, ends up on top and gets the win. The bizarre rules made the match confusing plus since the wrestling went on hiatus it made it tough to watch. It did have its moments. Recommended for the adventurous viewer.

Shinobu Kandori/ Rumi Kazama/ Harley Saito/ Noriyo Tateno vs. Eagle Sawai/ Lioness Asuka/ Michiko Nagashima/ Sayori Okino:

This is an elimination match that is incredible wild and action packed, not really a great match but definitely entertaining. Everybody brings their game except Eagle Sawai and Sayori Okino. Sawai because she is a big, big piece of shit and Okino because she gets eliminated 10 seconds into the match by Kandori. Kandori then gets bumrushed by her other three opponents and it pretty much is non stop action. Harley Saito continues to win me over as she just kicks the crap out of everyone. Nagashima, making her first appearance on my television screen, decides to return the favor in vicious style. Sweet, sweet ass kicking. Kazama blatantly steals from Kawada as she steals his short kicks to the face. Hey, if you are going to copy there are worse people to do it from. Okino makes a quick reappearance to save Asuka from getting eliminated. It turns out that she was just prolonging the inevitable as Kazama just levels Asuka with a reverse kick to the back of the head. Kazama gets no time to celebrate the elimination however as Nagashima charges in and introduces her foot to the inside of Kazama's face. Then just to inflict a little more pain, she gives her a wicked Tiger Bomb on a chair. Saito then gets the beat down thrown on her. She takes a piledriver onto the floor then gets utterly flattened against one of them unbreakable Japanese tables by Asuka. That spot is one that you will rewind about

19 times. The heels then even the playing field as Nagashima gives Tateno two Tiger Bombs onto the chair to eliminate her. Saito gets handcuffed to the corner so everyone can work over Kandori. This leads to the great visual of wrestling in the ring and then all the eliminated girls fighting on the outside as they try to free Saito. Kandori can't fight off the attack of three women as she gets stuff powerbombed. This elimination surprises me but- hey!- it's Saito's coming out party. She gets free of the handcuffs only to start getting worked over by Sawai and Nagashima. Of course, this means mostly Nagashima beating up Saito while Sawai lumbers around. Nagashima accidentally hits Sawai with a missile dropkick, which lets Saito eliminate Nagashima as she whips out a La Magistral. Hey look, Eagle Sawai still hasn't done anything in the match. What a surprise. I shit you not. She hits three Sid level powerbomb and then flops down to the mat a lot. Kandori grows impatient, runs in and clubs Sawai with a chain and Saito gets the win for her team. Happy, Happy, Joy, Joy!

&*~&*~&*~&*~& BIG JAPAN- KING OF THE DEATH MATCHES TOURNAMENT- 6/8/98, 7/26/98, 8/9/98.

(byPHIL SCHNEIDER)

Mitsuharu Matsunaga vs Jason the Terrible- Barbed Wire Baseball Bat and Barbedwire Board Match(6/8/98):

Matsunaga is sort of like the Frank Zappa of Japanese Garbage wrestling. His only construct is innovation, he must break new ground and try new things no matter what. Sometimes it will be good; often it will suck, but it will always be different. You can just tell he is the mastermind behind all the high concept Big Japan death matches (Piranha, Alligator, Circus, Bug Zapper ect.) because he gets all high concept even in your meat and potatoes death match like this one. This match was really clipped, which was a shame, I like Jason; he is one of the best actual wrestlers hanging around the seedy underbelly of Japanese wrestling, although he didn't do much in this match. Matsunaga busted out the barbed wire board sandwich with a moonsault garnish, and won the match with a barbedwire baseball bat camel clutch, which wasn't that cool- but was unusual.

Mr. Pogo vs Kung Fu Lee- Barbed Wire Baseball Bat and Barbedwire Board Match (6/8/98):

Kung Fu Lee is the horrific Great Kojika in a gi. This match was mercifully clipped and was basically a obese elderly man stabbing a gaunt elderly man in the back with a knife. Pogo wins by choking Kojika with a chain. I hate both of these guys a lot.

Shadow WX vs Tomoaki Honma- Barbed Wire Baseball Bat and Barbedwire Board Match (7/26/98):

This ruled it pretty hard. Definitely the best post Yamakawa BJJ death match, and in the top five non Tajiri matches in the history of the league. Honma, who has already proven he can hang with the Battlearts boys on the mat, and fly with Tajiri, out-garbage full time garbage boy WX. Lots of big bumps in this one, Honma hits an enziguiri on WX which sends him off a platform through a barbedwire board. Honma does a huge blade job, and he gets powerbombed off that platform through a barbedwire board. WX wraps a string of wire around Honma's head, which Honma uses to give a diving barbedwire headbutt. WX doesn't do much but he doesn't

screw anything up either. Honma busts out some nice kicks and a sweet German suplex to complete the coolness. WX wins which kind of sucked and they do the lame Big Japan death match staple, where the two guys grab each other by the hair and walk around the arena, it looks like they are doing a little dance, they do it in every match, and it really blows. Besides that little part this match rocked and was definitely the best on the tape.

Shadow Winger vs Shoji Nakamaki- Barbed Wire Baseball Bat and Barbedwire Board Match (7/26/98):

Shoji mails this baby in, as him and Winger try a bunch of wrestling, and if there is one thing you never want it is Shoji Nakamaki taking it to the mat. One good bump as Nakamaki is German Suplexed through the barbed wire board. Winger wins with an STF in about 6 minutes. Not worth the tape it was filmed on.

Shadow WX vs Mr. Pogo- No Ropes Barbed Wire Match (7/26/98):

Basically just an excuse for Pogo to rummage through his kitchen drawer, as he spends the match cutting up WX with knives, drills, swords and a huge electric cutting knife. Not very interesting or fun to watch. One cool bump as WX gets whipped into the barbed wire really hard and goes flying to the floor, which sends the top strand of barbedwire whipping into the audience, jabbing a bunch of sleazy Yakuza hangers-on. Besides that this was FF material.

Mitsiharu Matsunaga vs Shadow Winger- No Ropes Barbed Wire Match (7/26/98):

I dug this match. It wasn't as good as WX vs Honma, but it definitely had it's moments. Matsunaga was all weird in this one, running chest first into the barberwire to use it to assist as splash, giving Winger a barbedwire crossface, and getting suplexed from the floor into the barbedwire. They had an extended hair pulling arena tour section, with a Nasty Boys v. Harlem Heat Uncensored 95esque concession stand brawl. Winger broke out an insane tope-con-hilo over the barbedwire, nearly castrating himself. Matsunaga won the match after a trio of pyramid powerbombs on a pile of barbedwire and a German Suplex on the barbed wire. The good was pretty good and the bad was pretty bad.

Mitsiharu Matsunaga vs Mr. Pogo- Burning Trailer glass barbed wire match (8/9/98):

This was a fire match with glass windowpane and a casket in the middle. Not bad, with some good fire bumps, and a legitimately insane face-first bump into the glass windowpane by Mitsiharu. Matsunaga innovates by lighting his ankle pad on fire and kicking Pogo with it. Pogo lit his scythe on fire and popped Matsunaga with it. It is hard to really appreciate a fire match after watching the fire match in W*ING. You are just sitting there watching Pogo get his head pushed into a flame, and your thinking "Big fucking deal- it isn't like he is burning all the skin on his back off." The end was kind of cool as Pogo puts Matsunaga in the casket and set it on fire, which would have been really stupid in a Kane match, but was kind of cool in Big Japan, because there isn't any pussy trapdoor- Matsunaga is really burning up. Kind of long but with some cool stuff.

This tape was pretty good for Big Japan, since Yamakawa has become the Japanese Scotty Riggs, Big Japan's death match have sucked ass. There was two and half good matches on this tape which ain't bad at all, although the pretty good undercard wrestling matches were missing.

Jd' #31- 11/20/98 (taped 8/24/98 from Kitazawa Town Hall)
(byDEAN RASMUSSEN)

HIYA! Jd! DIGGIT! This is their Display of Youngster Talent and it's pretty good considering how much all of these young ladies looked totally lost a mere year ago.

Obacchi vs Fujiwara:

Obacchi lizuka. It's official. SHE RULES. Well, she rules in a spunky Jd rookie kinda way. The whole Crazy Green-grocer gimmick works well with her budding Ito-esque offense for whatever reason. Fujiwara gets in the most offense with her rookie high-flying and she's quite competent. Obacchi finally goes Flying Body Tackle And In Ring Flying Tope CRAZY as she freaks out to the finish with her super spunky low altitude high-impact attack. She puts away the comely young Fujiwara with a second rope springboard Senton and it was downright A-OKAY! A new Jd star is rising. Her green grocer foreign object was a bag of flour and it was all REALLY adorable. And that's GOOD. A bunch of stars and planets for this one. Plus the Stockard Channing In N'Grease hairstyle is to DIE FOR. Add that to her Blue Collar Gal persona and you have a... Golly!... I'm not sure WHAT we have with Obacchi- is there a precedent for the Blue Collar Joe in Japanese Women's Wrestling? Either way, I'm all for it.

Fang Suzuki vs Hechisera:

Fang is really horrible. She really cheats a lot. She does a lot of chokeslams that suck. Hechisera does a cool Cartwheel Roll-up that Iishi in GAEA did once. Hey! You gotta N'Jd Lean On The Fast Forward Special RIGHT THERE! AWRIGHT!

Yabushita vs Yuki Li:

Judo Girl (the lesser- compared to the spunkier Sakai) Yabushita takes on the Middle Of All Women's Wrestlers Yuki Li. Yuki is actually better in this match- being a poorman's Lioness putting a lot of lowgrade kicks and powermoves to set up Yabushita's Judo stuff, which is all pretty cool for a limited wrestler like Yuki. Yabushita hasn't advanced as quickly as Sakai who has developed quite the arsenal of high-flying moves and MUCH better suplexes. This is quite acceptable wrestling. And I'm VERY glad that they edited this down from the twenty minute version.

Kosugi/Abe vs Toyoda/Wakizawa:

Kosugi and Abe blow a lot of stuff in this baby, but Kosugi isn't afraid to whip out the toprope Springboard Rana and I'm all over it. Wakizawa has actually progressed the most of anyone on this tape because she looked hopeless for a LONG time but I see that Jaguar has finally driven her wrestling lessons home because she's to the point that you don't notice her- which is MUCH better than before when all you could do is notice her blowing everything. Next step: Minky Goodness. Kosugi is starting to get all Vixenlike on us and I'm digging it. She has that

&&&& when you're dreaming does your lover have my faceSINGLES

GOING STEADY! %%%%%%%%%%

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%%%%%%%%%% Yumiko Hotta (AJW) vs Angel Amrossa: LLPW 1998 L-1 Shootfight Tournament : (REV RAY!)- I ended up watching this at Pogo Pete Stein's house. Pete can read some Japanese and he pointed out that Angel was the same Angel who managed in ECW. Angel's past includes getting beat up in ECW, having a piece of metal barb lodged in her forehead during one of Ian Rotten's death matches (I think against Abuddah Signh) in the NWA and also for doing some bondage video. She goes from that background to the octagon against one of the women who if Ernest Miller's kicks were anything like her's, the phrase "Miller kicks like a girl" wouldn't be an insult. Angel throws one punch and Hotta locks her up and takes her down. Hotta mounts her, throws one or two punches as Angel tries to cover up. Hotta then PLAYS TO THE CROWD. In a shootfight... well, at least that's what they were calling them. This will give you a gauge of Angel's shootin' skill. The remainder of this match, all 1 minute 9 seconds of it is Hotta trying to figure out how to hook one of Angel's arms for the cross armbreaker. The most damage suffered by Hotta is probably when she leaned her face against the cage while trying to leverage the arm when moving in the kill. Hotta wins and Angel considers moving into the porn industry.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ Fit Finlay vs. LORENZO: THE RIPPER-WCW TV: 3/98- There once was this mythical match that occurred on Saturday Night between Ice Train and Chris Benoit. That match was much sought after by many who wanted to see sheer carnage. That took place in 1997. The 1998 version is this match. Dean was the only one of us who had witness that carnage that Sir Fit Finlay unleashed on the poor unsuspecting Power Plant graduate known as LORENZO. I have been searching all these WCW tapes for this one match so Phil and I could see. Finally, the mystery around the match is over. I have witnessed it with my own eyes. And golly gee was it worth it. Let me first tell you that LORENZO is a roided freak who looks exactly like Paul Orndorff (well at least in the face). Anyhoo, Tenay and Hudson foreshadow the match by saying that Finlay is upset with his standing in the federation and it going to make an example out of LORENZO. Hudson comes up with some great line about asking for Finlay to show mercy or something. Okay we all now that Finlay is going to work stiff as a mother. That is not surprising. But every once and a while his fury comes out. Ask Scott Putski. Ask Barry Houston. Make sure you ask LORENZO. The match starts off innocently enough as Finlay just applies a nerve hold. A whip to the rope and LORENZO blows a leapfrog, landing right on top of Finlay's head. The collective "OH FUCK" can be felt through the crowd and I am just thinking "Here we go". Straight rights to the face is what starts the party. Then there are some chops peppered in with three kicks to the back that are absolutely sickening. See- thanks to Finlay, LORENZO can now make his pecs dance. Amidst the violence, Finlay hits LORENZO with the biggest, baddest, hardest clothesline that I ever seen. Right in the chin. He hit him so hard the Nick Patrick winced. LORENZO was looking for teeth. Crawling around the ring looking for teeth. Right on my television screen. Man o man, it goes on like this for about six minutes. Finlay drops a elbow right in the throat. Every slam has some added kick to it. The best is that LORENZO gets in some Renegade level offense (we are talking a slam and punch and a goofy splash in the corner) which leads Finlay to bury his head into LORENZO's sternum on the rolling slam. Then

there is the tombstone. I'm sure that LORENZO is a couple of inches shorter now thanks to having his head stuffed into the mat. That's all she wrote. LORENZO dead right there. I am still trying to figure out what LORENZO did to piss Finlay off. Did he steal something? Did he have an affair with his wife? Did he look at him funny? Who cares? This baby gets runner-up status in Match Of The Year consideration. That would be right behind Raven/Benoit. Woo-Hoo!!! More death and destruction.

Svetlana Goundarenko (Russian Judo) vs Shinobu Kandori (LLPW)- LLPW L-1 Tournament: (REV RAY!)- Goundarenko is big.... so big I wasn't sure if the Hyundai logo on her gi was her sponsor or her manufacturer. At 330 pounds, this is one person who's never said no to the question "You want gravy with that?" She makes Kandori, who I've sometimes referred to as "Mandori"- look petite. Svetlana chases Kandori around the octagon a whole bunch. Kandori escapes a headlock take down and then they throw a bunch of not very inspired punches and kicks at one another. Svetlana gets in the first throw and mounts Kandori, but can't seem to get a hold on, so Kandori escapes. Kandori gets the next take down and works towards a hold. Svetlana tries to Fireman's Carry her over, but Kandori looks on a front choke for the win at 4:08.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ Los Insectivores vs Imposter Psycosis possibly/ Abismo Negro or something/ Fuck, I don't know. AAA or PAPSA: (RASMUSSEN!)- I remember when I first figured out that I was unhip. I was in a band (that actually toured and put out cd's) and they were all a couple of years younger than me and they really got into the music of the band Pavement. That was cool because a guy I went to artschool with and with whom I used to drink endless bottles of Old Crow plays drums for them and all and he was in a really cool band in Richmond back in the day and he's a True King of Men. But the music sucked I thought and the songwriting was swamy, off-hand, and that irritating brand of IRONIC that I hate so I didn't dig it. Then these other bands came along that they were into of the same ilk and I started getting into the Verlaines and the Bats and the Loud Family which are all made up of guys as old or older than I was and am. These bands aren't hip but they spoke to me more and I settled into an older married guy groove, quit that band and eventually joined the band I'm in now which is a bunch of guys my age or older who rock without irony- which is all I want. This match made me feel like I was listening to that Pavement cd all over again. I used to ALWAYS be up on the super goofball youngster freak-out groups but this one is lost on me. They pile up the technicos, beat them with oversized fly-swatters and try to put them in bags. AAA has reached a point with their preposterously elaborate outfits that it's becoming New Japan versus WAR again- except with the NJ you couldn't tell any of the old guys in black tights apart and here you can't tell any of the guys with the two foot high masks apart. I'm old. To hell with this crap. Gimme CMLL. Gimme Roxy Music. YOU KIDS GET OFF MY LAWN!

NEXT WEEK: Everything that we didn't review this week! KOBASHI vs MISAWA! METRIC TONS OF NEW JAPAN! AJW ATHENA! VADER AND HANSEN IN JAPAN! POSSIBLY A NAIMARK SPOTTING! WOO-HOO!

Death Valley Playboys.

I believed in the Cupid- I thought of kissing you for all of my life- I guess I'm just a little stupid- I think it's time I went back Rome.

-Frank Black.

*I realize that N'The FantastixÓ was Off-Broadway but it's MY cretinous elaborate obscure joke, so give a brother a break. Thank you. YES. I FINALLY get to use all those showtunes I learned in swing choir in High School. It shant happen again.